

Scranton

Tribune.

TEN PAGES.

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TWO CENTS.

War Department Expects Soon to Hear of Big Fighting.

Washington, June 30.—The situation at the close of the day was described by Secretary Alger as being such as to warrant him in entertaining the expectation of important news at any moment. There were two parties to a battle and it might be precipitated by either side and no one knew what the Spanish disposition was. Nor is much more known respecting General Shafter's plan of attack, although in his message of yesterday he indicated a purpose to move early on the enemy, as shown by his declaration that reinforcements could not reach him before he offered battle.

Secretary Alger was very much gratified when he learned today that direct telegraphic communication now existed between Washington and General Shafter's headquarters at Siboney. Heretofore all messages from the general have been delayed twenty-four hours, owing to the necessity of sending them across rough country to reach the cable station. The loss of so much time might be vital in case of urgent need for reinforcements or of ammunition and supplies.

NAVY TO AID.
The opinion is held here that the navy will co-operate in the attack on Santiago and that to that end part of Shafter's force is to move immediately upon Morro castle to capture the fort and enable the naval launches to open the gateway into the harbor by removing the mines. The experience of the vessels while in Guantanamo harbor in pulling up mines there is expected to very much facilitate similar work at Santiago.

REINFORCEMENTS EN-ROUTE.
The second expedition from Tampa to reinforce Shafter appears to have encountered almost as many difficulties as the original expedition in getting away. It was confidently expected here that the start would be made from Tampa last Monday, but one difficulty after another has arisen to retard the movement so that it was with a feeling of relief that the news came to the department from Tampa that the flag-ship of the expedition, the Hudson, has swung out into the stream and is ready to lead the procession of transports which it is believed by this time are under way bound for Santiago.

It is calculated that the second installment of the reinforcements despatched to Shafter from Camp Alger via steamer from Newport News, Va., reached him today on the Harvard and the steamer Yale is expected at Newport News day after tomorrow, returning from her first trip with Duffield's soldiers to take more reinforcements, probably including Garretson's battalion. The department is thoroughly satisfied with this method of transporting the troops from Camp Alger, having found

it to be not only much more economical than the combined rail and water route via Tampa, but more expeditious. The steamers will be further availed of in pursuance of Secretary Alger's intention to continue to despatch reinforcements after reinforcements to Shafter until he has an overpowering force at his command. The secretary believes that no ground is lost in this way, for if there is an overplus of troops at Santiago they can be easily used elsewhere. Major General Coppinger is not to go to Santiago with any of these additional forces. He is senior to General Shafter and if sent to Santiago by virtue of the army regulations, would assume command of the army in front of that place. Therefore it is likely that he will be reserved for the command of the Porto Rican expedition.

NAVAL MATTERS.
It was announced at the navy department this afternoon that the Spanish Cadiz squadron had paid the heavy Suez Canal toll and was about to proceed eastward through the canal, though this statement was probably erroneous in view of the later reports to the press indicating that the Spanish vessels were stopping for repairs. The advice only hastened the preparations making for the departure of Commodore Watson's eastern squadron. The commodore has reported to the navy department his arrival off Santiago and is in consultation with Admiral Sampson respecting the details of the cruise, which cruise, it is expected, will occupy fully four months provided the war endures that length of time.

THE DELAYS TO WHICH THE SPANISH ARE SUBJECT at Port Said will redound very greatly to the advantage of Admiral Dewey. If the Camara is still in reality bound for the Philippines, for they ensure the arrival of almost the whole of General Merritt's military force and almost certainly of the cruiser Charleston and the monitors Monterey and Monomachus before the Spanish squadron could reach Manila harbor.

MAY TRY BALLOONS.
The reports from Santiago as to reconnoitering parties and efforts of our officers to take observations of the city leads to the belief at the war department that a big balloon may be utilized by General Shafter as a means of surveying Santiago and all the surrounding country. General Greeley, chief signal officer, sent a complete balloon train with General Shafter's expedition and it is now available for use on the field if General Shafter desires this mode of observation. The balloon is of the largest make, and contains, when inflated, 17,000 cubic feet of gas. The complete equipment of gas making machine and apparatus for filling the balloon accompanies the train. An experienced aeronaut, a major in the signal service, has the balloon train in charge. It is said the observations could be taken at a height of several thousand feet, the balloon being anchored within the American lines, with continuous communication between the balloon and the ground by means of a telephonic adjustment. The balloon observations are in vogue with foreign military bodies, but it is thought that General Shafter may not feel disposed on the eve of a big fight to try a comparatively new device in warfare.

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